

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

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Horatio Alger: Symbol For Success

By Marjorie Heins



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Horatio Alger: Symbol For Success

By Marjorie Heins

Prepared by Miss Heins as part of a History course at Northwestern U.

The name Horatio Alger has become synonymous with success—not just any kind of success, but that spectacular brand in which the hero starts at the bottom and skyrockets, after much struggle and perseverance, to fame and fortune. The rags-to-riches legend has persisted, in one form or another, throughout the span of American history. One has only to examine the popular versions of the careers of Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln, Rockefeller, Carnegie and Hoover, to mention a few of the more conspicuous out of hundreds of such examples. In many cases, including some of the above mentioned, fiction does not jibe with reality, but still the legend will not down. Of all its many exponents, the name of a man whose personal life was a failure, and whose books are now all but forgotten except in the minds of a few nostalgic grandfathers, has become a symbol of the legend itself. Like the legend for which his name stands, Horatio Alger's "message" has undergone a metamorphosis, adapting itself to the changing times. The following is an attempt to examine the impact of that message in its original and more recent manifestations in order to discover to what extent Horatio Alger really influenced the people of his and succeeding generations, and in the process to throw some light upon the nature of the legend itself.

The problems which the historian must face in this type of inquiry are rather formidable and no one has yet worked out a really satisfactory approach. Embedded as it is in mass or popular culture, a myth or legend reveals as much about the social as the intellectual climate in which it occurs. Hence the concepts it embodies must be analyzed both in relation to their ideological content and in relation to the wider social context in which they occur. Social, psychological, intellectual, literary and historical approaches must all be utilized in what one intellectual historian has chosen to label the "plebeian school" of intellectual history. Thus the historian must rely upon what the majority of his colleagues still consider unorthodox methods in arriving at his conclusions, which at times display an impressionistic quality that seemingly defies empirical analysis.

Horatio Alger's novels for boys appeared at the rate of three to four per year from 1868 until his death in 1899. No one has as yet determined the exact number—estimates range from one hundred-seventeen to one hundred thirty-five. Alger himself claimed in 1899 to have written seventy and the Chicago Tribune death notice lists the total as forty. Approximately ten to eleven new novels bearing Alger's name appeared after his death, but these have since been credited to other authors, chief among whom was Edward Stratemeyer, another famous juvenile writer more commonly known as Arthur M. Winfield. Alger's most famous novel, actually his eighth rather than his first, as is commonly claimed, was "Ragged Dick."

Although the names of the characters, and upon occasion the locale, vary,

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the basic plot is essentially the same in all of Alger's books. The main ingredients are a boy of middle class origins espousing the appropriate value structure, who, through some inadvertent misfortune, is thrust into a situation of forced mobility taking on the role of bootblack, fiddler, pedler, hired hand, etc.; and his widowed mother, who is tormented by the village squire or a cruel landlord. Invariably the boy (always described as a cheerful, plucky lad of resolute features, who, in spite of his ragged appearance, is always prompt and clean and neither smokes nor drinks) meets a stranger and rescues his daughter from a mad dog, a runaway horse, or his son from drowning. The stranger turns out to be a rich merchant who gives the lad a job as a clerk in his firm, and the reader is left with intimations that the youth is well on the road to success and will one day marry the boss's daughter and inherit his estate. Luck definitely plays a leading role in our young hero's climb to success. Alger is very realistic in portraying the impossibility of accumulating any capital by saving from the meager salary of a bootblack or handyboy. In fact he graphically portrays how the slightest indulgence or unwarranted extravagance will bring on immediate disaster. However, luck in the form of divine providence does not just happen to anybody. Success comes, as is didactically pointed out in one story after another, as a reward for being virtuous. Faithfulness to the tenets of Protestant middle class character, to the strive and succeed philosophy of life, is rewarded by heaven. In the end, success is the result of the proper station and parentage that is the hero's by right of birth. His temporary fall from a state of innocent grace may be regarded as a testing of his character in order to justify the untold wealth that is to come. Virtuousness brings its reward—material success—and the rich villains and their idle, sneering sons also reap their just desserts—financial failure and social ostracism.

Alger has been characterized by one writer as "a major pump station on the pipe line that carried the American dream." Certainly he added little if anything to the enumerated list of thirteen virtues which Benjamin Franklin had considered necessary—along with heaven's blessing—for success. In fact, Alger merely transformed Poor Richard's "dry-as-dust" sermons into a "living ethic with which the reader could identify himself and his ambitions. He became "a kind of institution touched by divine grace" (much like general motors during the 1950's) because he managed energetically and convincingly to "raise the obvious to its highest level of generality" at a time when the masses were attempting to explain the Nineteenth Century revolution which had brought them to the fore.

Writing during the "Gilded Age," an era renowned for shameless and open corruption in public life and cutthroat competition among industrial entrepreneurs, Alger merely echoed the dominant myths, hopes, and prejudices of the majority of Americans during the period when the West was being opened, technological inventions were multiplying at an enormous rate, and the average American was hard-headed, diligent and astute in business matters. The chief aim in life was, as Alger's heroes put it, "to grow up respectable" and one's respectability was measured not by social, intellectual or professional leadership, but by the amount of money one had. Once one had made it to the top rungs of the ladder of success he did not inquire unduly from whence his wealth had come—it was heaven's reward for hard work and severe self-discipline ("God gave me my money" as Rockefeller so aptly put it). Nor did Alger. Although he meticulously recorded every penny of his heroes' meager earnings while they were struggling at the bottom, his allusions to their actual rise to fame and fortune were vague and nebulous. This shy, immature, nervous little man, unsuccessfully searching for the happy boyhood

his domineering father had denied him, by projecting his fantasies of success into books for boys, happened, as circumstances would have it, to be just the right man for the times.

All of which brings us to the inevitable question—was Alger's influence really as great as later writers have claimed? Here one must enter the realm of speculation. How does one measure a writer's influence—by the number of books sold? By the frequency of favorable and unfavorable reviews? By the testimony of people, famous and otherwise, who have read the books? All of the above methods have been and no doubt will continue to be employed, but in the final analysis the problem eludes empirical verification.

In Alger's case it is impossible for the historian to determine the number of books sold. Alger collectors, of which there are a devoted few, have been unable to determine the exact number of books Alger wrote. In addition, book publishers during that period did not keep accurate records of the volume of sales or the number of editions of a work printed. Most of Alger's books went through several editions under a number of different publishers, finally closing their careers in dime novel form. Often titles were changed in the process. Frank Luther Mott, judging as accurately as is possible from available figures, estimates the total number of Alger books sold at seventeen million. Dividing that figure by the one hundred thirty-five volumes Mayes lists for Alger in his biography, Mott finds it "hard to get much more than 125,000 for a single book," far from enough to make the best seller list according to his standards. Of all of Alger's books, only "Ragged Dick" had that distinction. Mott's figures, aside from their doubtful accuracy, give no real indication of the number of people Alger's books actually reached. Boys who owned one of Alger's books often owned several and passed them around among their friends. In addition, according to one contemporary source, "all the large circulating libraries in the country have several complete sets, of which only two or three volumes are ever on the shelves at one time," (perhaps a slight exaggeration).

Contemporary reviews of Alger's books are especially difficult to find for a number of reasons. In the first place, newspapers such as the New York Times did not publish indexes during the Nineteenth Century, nor is Poole's Guide to periodical literature very complete. Secondly, as children's books, it is to be taken for granted that they did not receive anywhere near the extensive critical treatment given adult fiction. However, most adult literary magazines, such as "Harper's" and "The Atlantic" did contain a section devoted to children's literature. And it is interesting to note that while Louisa May Alcott's books were receiving a great amount of attention, Alger's were not even mentioned, although Alger had contributed a number of stories to "Harper's" during the 1860's.

The one review that I managed to find in "The Nation" is very sarcastic. Opening thusly,

For a thousand years, we suppose, we shall have books like Mr. Alger's "Rough and Ready," and, as they say in the South, for our own part "we have no use for them."

It proceeds to castigate the false picture Alger has painted of the newsboy's character as one which is bound to deceive his readers, concluding,

The newsboy is not a Christian of the first two centuries; but he has his good points, too; and at any rate he is an interesting figure as he stands . . . After all is said, there is no need of depicting him in any imaginary aspect to make him both respectable and interesting.

Although it is often claimed that the clergy were among the strongest endorsers of Alger's books, the "Christian Union," which was edited by Rev.

Henry Ward Beecher, one of the leading proponents of the self-help cult, gave "Ben, the Luggage Boy," a rather unfavorable review. Among other faults, it criticizes Alger's style as being among the degenerate imitators of one Jacob Abbot, an earlier, though by no means outstanding, writer of children's stories. Thus Alger's books, as is so often true of works catering to the popular taste, cannot assert any claim to originality, being at best only second or third rate imitations of better works of a bygone era.

From the above reviews it would appear that Horatio Alger's works were not highly valued among the literary elite. Alger himself, who had graduated eighth in his class at Harvard, and who throughout his life desired to write the one great American novel, certainly had no illusions about their literary merit. The more he wrote, the further his goal receded, until upon his deathbed he demanded that his books be taken from the room.

Even "St. Nicholas," a children's magazine, began to express doubts after its initial burst of enthusiasm. In 1873 it wholeheartedly endorsed "Try and Trust," claiming,

Here is a book for the boys by a capital writer . . . Its fresh incidents will delight you and you'll take in good lessons without knowing it.

In its 1874 review of "Risen from the Ranks," praise for the outstanding moral example of the hero was still present—"Harry Walton's example will fire the heart of many a young reader, who will see how it is possible to achieve a great success in life after a very small beginning"—although the reviewer was rather critical of Alger's absent mindedness in the portrayal of one of the leading characters (a "flaw" which can be found in several of Alger's books):

This book is one that can be honestly commended to young folks, though we do really think that Mr. Alger ought to explain to us how Oscar's father, who begins the story as an India merchant, ends it as a Boston editor.

The same review had the following to say about still another of Alger's books: To Brave and Bold, another of Mr. Alger's stories, we cannot award like praise. The story is of the "sensational" order, while the characters are such as we do not meet in real life—and we are very glad that we don't meet them. The book appears more hurriedly composed than some of the author's other works, and this may account for its deficiencies.

Thus, in a period of two years and as many book reviews, "St. Nicholas" reversed its position of wholehearted endorsement to that of condemnation. Unfortunately, this was the last of its reviews and it is impossible to judge, although easy to infer, the editor's opinion of Alger's later works.

From the above reviews, it would seem that Alger was not as enthusiastically received as later writers have inferred. However, in spite of what disparaging critics might say, Alger's books merely reinforced the stories contained in the elementary school readers of that period. The foremost of these were the McGuffey Readers, which were used in the public schools of thirty-seven states, selling over one hundred twenty-two million copies from 1836 to the end of the century. In conjunction with the basic influence they must have wielded, Alger's books probably appeared as so much frosting on the cake, telling American boys "what they already half-believed and wanted to go on believing." No real person ever possessed "character" like that of a young man on the make in one of Alger's novels, yet, as Edward Kirkland clearly demonstrates in "Dream and Thought in the Business Community, 1860-90," the robber barons themselves wished to have it the same way. For all practical purposes, what Alger mirrored may have been less reality than a dream, but it was nevertheless a very revealing dream; a dream that consisted of "ideal accuracy, neatness, promptness, self-reliance, thrift, honesty, loyalty,

industry, stick-to-itiveness and gumption."

Certainly Alger's publisher from 1864-81, A. K. Loring, recognized the hold of this dream upon the American public and put it to good financial advantage. Starting out with a lending library, he soon acquired the ability to gauge popular taste, which he later put to profitable use as a publisher. At one point in his career he confessed that he judged a book solely by the feelings it aroused. He liked "conciseness in introducing the characters, . . . constant action, bustle and motion," and a moral lesson in a story that "goes steadily on increasing in interest til it culminates with the closing chapter leaving you spell bound, enchanted and exhausted with the intensity with which it is written, the lesson forcibly told, and a yearning desire to turn back to the beginning and enjoy it over again." Loring firmly believed that "stories of the heart are what live in the memory and when you move the reader(s) to tears you have won them to you forever."

The success of Loring's formula is amply attested to by the later reminiscences of many of Alger's once devoted fans. When Brooks Atkinson made some "disparaging remarks" about Horatio Alger's books in one of his 1964 "New York Times" columns, calling them "mawkish and pedestrian," "bland and insipid," with dull dialogue which "suited the nonsense of thousands of boys many years ago," he received a host of replies from irate readers who had thoroughly enjoyed Alger's books in their youth and claimed to have profited by them. As he belatedly discovered, even in this late day and age "too many adults have fond memories of "Phil the Fiddler" and "Ragged Dick" and nostalgically believe tht "Alger made me what I am today"

What kind of boys were these men to whom Alger so successfully appealed? For the most part they were youths of small town or farm backgrounds eager to break loose from their rural environment during the era which saw the rapid rise of the American city. Alger's books especially appealed to this group for several reasons. First, his main characters were for the most part small town or farm boys who had migrated to the city to try their fortunes. Secondly, Alger explicitly equated their success with their rural, middle class, Protestant value structure. One writer even goes so far as to suggest that Alger was schizophrenic in his ambivalent attitude toward the small town as the repository of virtue and godliness and the big city as the place where the main chance lay. Thirdly, Alger appealed to the kind of "hum-drum practical success that most boys clearly saw ahead of them." At the same time, he vividly and minutely described the physical details of New York City, thus making it very real and familiar to many country boys, several of whom actually did manage to make their way there with the explicit intention of earning their way and possibly struggling upward to fame and fortune.

Alger's books also appealed, to a more limited extent, to immigrant boys, because his stories reinforced their faith in America as a land of unlimited opportunity for those who were willing to work. One of the replies to Atkinson's article was from a man whose family had come to America in 1913:

At the age of nine I learned the language quickly and as rapidly was exposed to Alger, first in newsboys' clubs and then in that underestimated treasure-house, the Public Library of New York. I read all the Alger books and then went on to Optic, Altsheler on the Civil War, and Henty with the English and Scott with the Scottish backgrounds, and from them to Dickens, Twain and Poe, etc.

Mr. Leon Levine further stated that Alger's stress on propriety, ethical standards, hard work and tenacity were responsible for shaping his belief in America as a land of opportunity.

Alger's decline in popularity was as sudden as his rise. He himself had declared that his books were as dated as the horse and buggy era and would probably go out of style when it did. His prediction proved to be very accurate indeed. Soon after the first decade of the Twentieth Century they had virtually disappeared from library shelves and no longer received the endorsement of parents or ministers. Boys found them increasingly stilted, didactic, and boring and soon became absorbed in the adventures of the Motor Boys, Tom Swift and the Hardy Boys. Later on they would increasingly devote their attention to the radio, the movies and comic books. Not only were boys becoming fascinated by the machine and the infinite possibilities of the new technological age—the over-simplified issues to which Alger had addressed his efforts were no longer relevant. Overcrowded cities with their teeming immigrant slums no longer posed as meccas of limitless opportunity to the innocent country boy shielded by the triple armor of pluck, luck and the Protestant ethic. In fact, the Protestant ethic itself had begun to crumble under the exposé tactics of the muckrakers who took vengeful delight in showing the results of excesses in entrepreneurial capitalism.

The common man who was himself unwilling to undergo the rigorous self-discipline and iron nerve of the industrial capitalist was nevertheless eager to reap the benefits of the capitalist's efforts. Therefore his awe and respect for the industrial giants were also mixed with no little envy and hatred. John P. Sisk points out that as time passed on, an anti-Alger hero made his appearance on the scene—a mythical comical fellow, "the Successful Boob," popularized by Charlie Chaplin, Harold Lloyd, Buster Keaton, Laurel and Hardy, Abbot and Costello, Bob Hope and Danny Kay. He broke all the rules of the success game but somehow always managed to bumble, fumble and stumble his way to the top, striking it rich and marrying a gorgeous girl, while Alger-type heroes with strong character and a capacity for self-denial were hooted off the stage.

During the depression Alger was all but forgotten. In 1932, upon the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, of 7,000 newsboys questioned by the Children's Aid Society, less than 20% had ever heard of Alger, only 14% had even read one of his books, and not one owned a single copy. In addition to being unknown to most newsboys, Alger's books were highly disapproved by many who had read or heard of them. In fact, the majority of boys interviewed dismissed the theory of "work and win" as "a lot of lunk."

When Mr. Leon Levine's two children applied at a branch library for some Alger books, the librarian reported that the branch did not keep them because "Alger was a dangerous prophet who misled people" into thinking that anyone could succeed in this country by hard work alone. Mr. Levine eventually found some Alger books in a second hand book shop, but his children regarded them as silly, outdated and unreadable.

With the return of prosperity during and after World War II, Alger once again reared his head. This time, however, there were noteworthy alterations in his appearance. As L. H. Robbins so succinctly put it in 1939,

Young readers of the present are just as keen for stories of success, the librarians say, as young readers ever were, but they are skeptical of the long arm of circumstance, which Alger worked so hard and so often. They want the heroes and the herines to succeed as most people must in real life—by their own efforts and not through chance or patronage.

Although there was not a revival of Alger's books, except for a brief period during the 1950's among the generation that read him in their youth, his name soon became the leading symbol of the modern version of the success story, which has undergone a very distinct but subtle alteration from the or-

iginal. Whereas Alger's version depicted a boy of middle class origins, thrust through circumstances beyond his control into a position of poverty out of which he struggled with pluck, luck and courage to attain the position that was rightfully his by virtue of birth and "upright moral character," the modern version, as portrayed in a sociology textbook, reads as follows:

Factors in Social Mobility

An individual may change his social position through the **exercise of superior energy**. (Author's emphasis) The Horatio Alger hero is an American stereotype. A boy who was born in the slums of a great city in a very low social position (emphasis added) becomes a bootblack, works hard, saves his money, attends school, applies himself to his studies, and **risks through sheer effort** (emphasis added) to a position of social, economic, and occupational importance. Such cases exist not only in sensational novels, but in real life.

Although the above appeared in the 1954 edition of Marion B. Smith's "Survey of Social Science," this modified interpretation is still in existence today, with the people espousing it apparently unaware of the subtle alteration they have made in the original version. In January, 1958, the "New York Times" carried an article entitled, "Harlem Youngsters Get Books by Horatio Alger." It went on to describe how some Puerto Rican youngsters in New York City's most notorious slum were introduced to the rags-to-riches tales of Horatio Alger. Ralph D. Gardner, a well-known Alger collector, was presenting a library of Alger's works to the East Harlem Center of the Children's Aid Society "with the hope that . . . (the youngsters) would follow in the footsteps of the writer's heroes."

(To be continued)

UNRAVELING THE SAALFIELD BOY SCOUT SERIES PUZZLE

Addendum No. One

By Bob Chenu

Subsequent to preparation of my April 1974 article on the Saalfeld Boy Scout series tangle, certain further information has come to my attention which extends and modifies the conclusions I presented as to the authorship of the key "MAITLAND-DURSTON" series.

This is the small sized edition printed on a poor quality paper, with a cardboard binding. There are twenty-four titles in this series, some of which are attributed to "Major Robert Maitland" while others bear a "Col. George Durston" byline.

For various reasons discussed in the former article, I concluded that these stories had all been written by Mrs. Georgia Roberts Durston. Thanks to the efforts of Professor David Mitchell of the State University of New York—Albany faculty, and the graduate librarian seminar group which he led in the spring of '74, we have some clarification as to the authorship involved.

It looks as though I was about half right in my conclusion that Mrs. Durston wrote these stories. This sounds much better than saying that I was half wrong! So much for my ego.

The source of the new data is the Catalog of Copyright Entries which was examined at the NY State Library in Albany, N. Y. The entries include data on title, subtitle, author, pages, date of copyright, publisher, etc. They also have entries which indicate who the author was if the name on the book is a pseudonym. This data is good but not infallible—however it opens some additional doors for us.

The initial surprises were entries indicating the first three of the series (Nos. 1, 2, and 3 on my chart with the April '74 article) were written by Fred-eric Van Rensseler Dey! Dey was a prolific dime novel writer for Street & Smith, who is most noted for having authored over a thousand Nick Carter tales. These first three stories were copyrighted in the name of Major Robert Maitland. It looks as though the Maitland name was a "house" pseudonym belonging to Saalfeld, and that this name is one not properly belonging to Dey, Durston, or any other individual.

Titles number 4, 5, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17 and 18 were written by William Almon Wolff, according to the entries found. Wolff is a new name to me in the field of juvenile fiction, but was a real person and this is not another pseudonym.

Wolff was born in Brooklyn, N. Y. on September 14, 1885; attended New York University 1902-1906; and worked as a sports writer on the N. Y. Tribune from 1906 to 1911. He contributed to magazines, among them Saturday Evening Post and Colliers. He wrote at least 7 adult novels and 1 play. He died on July 15, 1933 at the age of 47.

Thanks again to Dave Mitchell for this information.

Titles number 6, 13 and 14 carry entries which attribute authorship to "J. W. Duffield." The Bert Wilson series and two of the Donohue Radio Boys series carry this name as author. To date I have no information to clarify whether Duffield is some writers pen name or real name. Any information anyone could furnish would be welcomed.

Since the Bert Wilson series was published by Sully and the Radio Boys titles were published by Donohue it seems most likely that Duffield was not another Saalfeld house name.

Titles number 9, 10, 11, 12, 19, 20, 21 and 23 attribute authorship to Durston. Of all the names visible to start with, she remains the only one to emerge as a real person.

The names appearing on the books of the Maitland-Durston series seem to follow a pattern. I haven't found any by anyone else which shows the Durston name. On the other hand, the Maitland name appears on books written by Dey, Duffield(?), and Wolff, as well as on some copies written by Durston. And so I deduce that Maitland, Fiske, Blaine, and Griggs are house pseudonyms which belonged to Saalfeld.

A further question which arose from examination of the C C E entries stemmed from the greater number of pages indicated for the same story in the Fiske lineup as compared with the Maitland-Durston lineup. I checked this carefully and the answer is the preparation of new plates with larger type, etc., so that there is less text on each page. The story remains the same, word for word.

However, it seems to be a pattern that I take two steps forward towards untangling this puzzle, and slide back one step. The slide back in this instance results from checking C C E entries for the Fiske World War series. These show Wolff as author of numbers 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18. In the case of numbers 13 and 14 this conflicts with the attribution to "J. W. Duffield" of these same stories in the original Maitland-Durston series. Several possibilities are raised. One is that C C E is wrong and this is just carelessness in the Fiske series entries. Another is that Wolff used Duffield as a pen name. If so, why use it for three stories and use his own name on the others?

In any event, here the matter rests at present. If any reader can shed light on this for me, I invite your correspondence. And again I offer my thanks to Dave Mitchell and credit him and his group of toiling graduate librarian scholars with the detective work leading to this addendum.

A DIME NOVEL COLLECTOR'S BOOK SHELF

LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET, by Mary Elizabeth Braddon. Introduction by Norman Donaldson. Dover Publications, Inc., 180 Varick St., New York, N. Y. 10014. \$3.00 paper bound. Although not really a dime novel subject, this is a reprint of a romance published many times in paper format by many dime novel publishers. Well worth addition to your book shelf.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES CONCERNING DIME NOVELS

A COLLECTORS BIBLIOGRAPHY OF U. S. BOY SCOUT FICTION, by James W. Froehlig. Article appearing in Scout Memorabilia, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1974. Harry Thorsen, publisher, 1000 Golfview Road, Glenview, Ill. 60025. A good bibliography of boys series about scouting.

RAY MERRIWELL OF THE METS by Red Smith. Syndicated column appearing in the New York Times, Sunday, September 15, 1974. Compares Ray Sadecki to (Ray) Merriwell. Red Smith as usual deprecates Merriwell. (Sent in by Jack Dizer.)

EDWARD STRATEMEYER AND THOSE FABULOUS FIFTY-CENTERS, by Linda Masterson and Julie Masterson Child. American Collector. Article about Edward Stratemeyer and his syndicate of writers. (Sent in by Jack Dizer.)

THE STRATEMEYER STRAIN: EDUCATION AND THE JUVENILE SERIES BOOK, 1900-1973, by Peter A. Soderbergh. Journal of Popular Culture, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1974. Another article on Stratemeyer and the juvenile reading habits during the series book era. (Sent in by Jack Dizer.)

REAL WEST ANNUAL 1974. Indians in Dime Novels. A pictorial featuring 3 pages of dime novel photos from the LeBlanc collection. 14 items illustrated, many rare ones. 75c Charlton Publications, Charlton, Bldg., Derby, Conn. 06418.

OLD PULP MAGAZINES WANTED and for sale, such as Doc Savage, Shadow, Spider, Phantom, Western Story, Wild West, G-8, Wings, science fiction, "spicy" mags and many others in the all-fiction field. Must be in excellent condition. What have you? Send list and price wanted.

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Back numbers Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel Roundup (quite a few reprints, can't be helped). Don't have the complete set of No. 1 to 237 inclusive, but almost, lacking only a few numbers. 10c each or \$21.00 postpaid. Have at least 230 numbers or more. Also two indexes, 1 Pioneer and Scouts of the Old West, Birthday number, War Library list and Dime Novel Catalog.

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GUINON

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MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

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- 139. John Edelberg, 234 53rd St., West New York, NJ 07093 (Change address)
- 368. T. Stewart Goas, 908 Willard Circle, State College, PA 16801 (New mem.)
- 369. S. K. Winther, 7521 41st Ave., N. E., Seattle, Wash. 98115 (New mem.)
- 343. Irving P. Leif, 205 Hampton Court, Blacksburg, Va. 24060 (Change add.)
- 83. Lyle Buchwitz, 1432 Rama Drive, West Covina, Calif. 91790

NEWS NOTES

Jack Schorr of 853 So. Lemon St., Anaheim, Calif. 92805, has a number of Nick Carters, New Medal Libraries in good to very good condition for sale. If interested drop him a line.

Robert McDowell of 1024 Kings Ave., Jacksonville, Fla., 32207 wants the following Tip Tops to complete his set: 1 5 7 8 11 12 13 15-23 26 41 42 47 49 50-58 60 62 63 64 65 67-78 81 85 86 89 90 93 96 97 102 103 114 116 118 122 123 124 140 169 488 644 647 648 750 789 810 811 812 814 923 932 933 934 937 838 842 844 845 847. New Tip Tops 5 11 13 20 27 34 42 44 52. Can anyone be of help?

The Guinness Book of World Records is considering inclusion of George Gloss of the Brattle Book Shop, Boston, in its next edition. Nobody anywhere appears to have, given away more free books than George. If you remember he had to unload 250,000 volumes in five moves over the past 10 years mainly to accommodate the Boston Redevelopment Authority. The famous shop is at 5 West Street now, with 350,000 books occupying the five stories of the 1812 building. The new face there, incidentally, belongs to George's son Kenneth, 24. He earned a degree in analytical chemistry at the U. of Mass., Amherst, and was supposed to go on for a doctorate at the U. of Wisconsin under a teaching scholarship in the fall, but is chucking chemistry to serve as his father's righthand man and to succeed him if and when George decides to retire. George couldn't be happier for this move.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Eddie:

Keep up with the good work on the Roundup! It would be sorely missed if you gave up on it. But I know you'll never let that happen. I know that I can't collect everything, but reading information about them gives me a good insight about the stories and authors. It's good to know that the Roundup is in existence and records all the literature about the past. Your efforts in everyone's behalf will never be a thankless one, so keep plugging away each month.

Clarence M. Fink,
Pasadena, California

I have no intention of giving up the Roundup. Thanks for your compliments.

FOR SALE

Some remaining of Castlemon: "sets" and singles; also of Ellis; Kirk Munroe; E. Kellogg; Optic; Otis; Stratemeyer; Tomlinson; Clarence Young; and lesser issues of Alger.

Have complete sets of: Beadle's Frontier Series; Deadwood Dick Libr.; All Sports Library; Blue and Gray Weekly; Three Chums Weekly; Might and Main Libr.; Motor Stories; Young Athletes Wkly; Frank Manley Wkly; Comrades; Do and Dare.

Have Ted Strong stories (1 through 65). Nice set of Jules Verne.

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